

Men's Trends

by Lou Schlanger

School bells will soon send high school and college men back to classes for another school year. Whether the teen man is a freshman or a senior, one of the perennial questions he'll need to have answered will concern his wardrobe. What to wear when, proper fit, correct coordination, and a million and one other fashion questions will be on his mind.

Answers to these questions may seem to be completely individual or regional in nature, but according to the American Institute of Men's and Boys' Wear, there are some basic ground rules for good grooming and taste. And they apply in all parts of the country.

In planning a back-to-school wardrobe, consider cost... colors... co-ordination... and the correct time and place. Remember, the most money doesn't necessarily make the best wardrobe; colors and patterns should be chosen with an eye towards easy mixing and matching; casual clothes are fine for casual activities, but dress-up clothes are indispensable in the life of the teen man.

The teen man's clothing philosophy is a contradictory and personal one... conservatism has a special meaning to him—he now likes belt loops on slacks, but still likes cuffless bottoms; he snaps up brightly colored and patterned shirts and sweaters, but still leans towards black and darkly patterned suits; he may choose a high-style iridescent suit, but also sport a rigidly traditional navy blazer.

In fulfilling his personal fashion likes and dislikes, the teen man may tend to go overboard on specific items and bypass the rules of good judgment to conform to his juvenile counterparts. Convincing him of the importance of being properly dressed may be difficult now, but it will bear fruit in the future. To help you, the AIMBW offers the following tips for teen men in selecting their fall wardrobe:

• CO-ORDINATION — A sensible clothing budget and careful planning will give the teen man a complete, practical and fashion-right school wardrobe. Buying with a thought towards mixing and matching outfits can more than double their value, and create an impression of an extensive wardrobe.

For example, the trousers of that high-style suit may also be worn with a shirt, tie and dressy cardigan sweater if the colors have been thought out before buying; the jacket of a traditional tweed or shetland winter suit can double as the perfect sport coat, worn with a pair of slacks in a solid color borrowed from the jacket; an all-weather outercoat that reverses from tweed to poplin, makes the obvious two-coats-in-one.

The combinations are unlimited when one or two colors and their variations form

the basis of a wardrobe, allowing for colorful accent highlights. Careful selection of patterns can further augment and supplement the wardrobe.

• PATTERNS — With the plethora of patterns turning up for fall, the problem immediately arises as to which patterns mix and which pattern combinations should be avoided. While the only ground rule for mixing patterns is the exercise of good taste and thought, there are some basic guidelines that should prove helpful to the beginner.

Let one pattern dominate the outfit, whether it be the suit or sport coat, the sweater or the slacks, the shirt of the tie. Work small, neat checks or plaids with bold stripes; vary the width, spacing and direction of stripe combinations; use polka dots and foulards as accents on stripes and plaids; mix classic patterns of varying degrees of intensity such as glen plaids, herringbones, club stripes, etc.; experiment with an all-light look or a combination of light-and-bright with dark-and-rich.

Whatever the teen man's personal pattern preferences and his ideas on mixing them, he shouldn't be afraid to try something different... to try various combinations until he or those whose taste he trusts, decide the effect is in good taste and reflect good fashion. Proper co-ordination and mixing of patterns are the first steps toward being well-dressed. The next is knowing when to wear them.

• APPROPRIATENESS — The old adage that there is a time and a place for everything is especially applicable to clothes. The hallmark of the well-dressed boy—or man—is dressing to fit the occasion... blue jeans and tee shirts to mow the lawn or to tune-up the jalopy; slacks sports shirts, sweaters or jacket and tie to go to school, to go on dates; suits and other dressy clothes to appear at more "formal" occasions.

The American fashion industry can point with pride to the fact that good looking, smart apparel is produced for every possible occasion in a boy's life — from swim and beachwear to formalwear. Proper attire for school (taking into consideration local taboos), trim but not tight slacks; sport shirts and sweaters, or dress shirts, ties and jackets; loafers or other slip-on shoes or oxfords (sneakers and tennis shoes belong in active or casual after-school activities); color-coordinated sport socks (white wool sweat socks worn with loafers are such a standard that they may be considered acceptable); casual, neat headwear and a variety of raincoats or casual waist-, hip- or knee-length outerwear.

After-school leisure activities call for any and all types of casual clothes... suit the outfit to the activity. Weekend dates call for sport coats, shirts and ties, sometimes with a lightweight sweater worn under the jacket, conservative slacks and co-ordinated socks and shoes. The boy and girl should always look like they are going to the same place.

Suits, properly accessorized. (Continued on Page 19)



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